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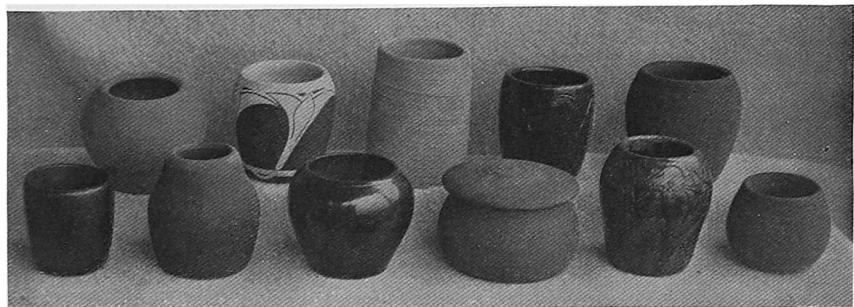
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POTTERY BY WILLIAM BULGER, DECORATIONS BY FRANK HAZENPLUG

## SOME WORK OF THE ARTS AND CRAFTS SOCIETY CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

At Hull House, on the evening of October 7th, the members of the Arts and Craft Society met to begin their second year of active work, one of their purposes being to make the necessary objects which surround our everyday life more artistically simple and natural, and to bring the efforts of artist and artisan more in touch.

Mr. George Twose, the secretary of the society, addressed the first meeting on the arts and crafts idea, and then followed one of the always interesting discussions.

At the second meeting two of the most actively interested members of the society, Mrs. Homer Taylor and Mr. William Bulger, talked to an encouragingly large audience, and made what they said doubly interesting by showing some successful examples of their experiments as craftsmen.

Copper work was Mrs. Taylor's topic, and she began by modestly stating that her only excuse for addressing her friends was an earnestness of purpose and enthusiasm in the work, for she knew herself to be but an apprentice. Yet as these very reasons are the essentials for successful results in most work, Mrs. Taylor proved herself very capable, even though she feels her work to be young.

With the sincere instincts of the craftsman, Mrs. Taylor begins the first stages of this work herself. The raw material comes from the rolling mills in large sheets, varying in thickness, some of the lighter grades weighing sixty pounds to the sheet.

Cutting the copper for use from this unwieldy sheet requires patience and very sharp cold chisels. Then, after this is done, the

annealing is the next step in making a bowl. This is begun by putting the metal in a fire, and when it has reached the red-hot stage it becomes somewhat plastic and ready to be hammered into shape. Alternate hammerings and annealings follow until the bowl is of the proper form. This part of the work is done on a table on which there are slight depressions, and these help the craftsman to shape the bowl.

As the work advances great care must be taken not to hammer once too often, for each blow renders the metal more brittle, and a crack is fatal, as it would end all thought of a future for the creation.

The completing process requires still more care and patience, for at this time the whole must be brought into good shape and made to



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stand firmly on a table, for a well-made vase never must "ride"—this is the expression used for any unevenness on the bottom.

A curtain of secrecy conceals from us the last treatment, which gives to the bowl its individual and artistic charm—the beautiful color. This was discovered by Mrs. Madelaine Yale Wynne, who was the first to use it successfully, and after a thin lacquer has been put over the bowl the copper keeps its beauty and luster for years. Sometimes a graceful design is cut about the edge or in the center of the dishes or bowls, but in most instances its color is felt to be the chief decoration.

Candlesticks, lamp-shades and many other attractive things have been made of copper by the craftsmen of the society; and Mrs. Wynne has used enamel on this metal most effectively.

Mrs. Taylor very justly concluded that the weak point in our arts and crafts work in several departments seems not to be in the original plan or in the construction so much as in the final decoration. We find refuge too often between the covers of some grammar of ornament, or are tempted by foreign ideas found in some alluring maga-

zine, so that the work in wood, metals and other materials loses a character and personal touch.

It was very interesting and reassuring in turning from Mrs. Taylor's work to find near by another example of originality, but of a different quality and charm. This was Mr. William Bulger's pottery, and he showed some very successful results of his experiments in clay. Some of the vases have been made quite unique and different from other pottery by Mr. Frank Hazenplug's designs, and of these I will write later.

Mr. Bulger's work has been done in odd hours, as it were, for it is only after the day's duty is over that he has time to probe deeper into

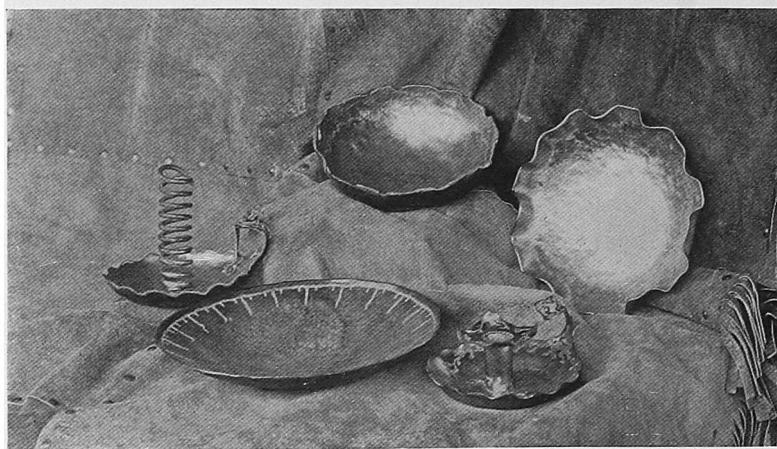


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the principles of the potter's art. His interest was first aroused by experimenting with glazes, and he used to put them on ordinary clay pottery which he could buy. But he must soon have wished to have the work his own from beginning to end, for now he has two kinds of clay, a potter's wheel and a kiln. This oven is not large enough to hold objects more than five or six inches high, so that the vases are quite uniform in height, and pleasantly simple in shape and line.

Mr. Bulger uses a red clay, which he found in the western part of Illinois, and then he has another of soft buff color which comes from Minnesota. These have to be carefully sifted and strained, as they must be in a clear and smooth condition before they are used. After this the clay is shaped on the wheel, and by mixing in different quantities of the two clays other colors may be produced, but the fire plays capriciously with the clay form, and often the color, when the vase is

taken from the oven, is not a bit what was expected or hoped for. Before a few of the vases were put in the kiln Mr. Hazenplug took them in hand and outlined some graceful designs in the clay. This



COPPERWORK BY MRS. ISADORE P. TAYLOR, KENILWORTH, ILLINOIS

was done when the vases were not really soft, but just impressionable, and Mr. Hazenplug seems not to have been particular about having tools, for he has used nothing more craftsmanlike than the wrong end of a paint brush for this work.

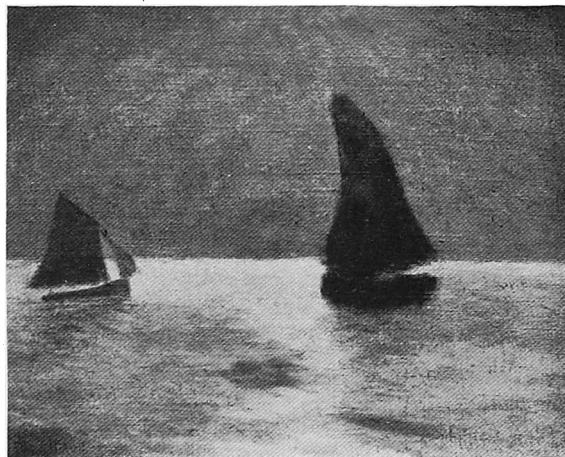
One of the most individual effects that Mr. Hazenplug reached in decorating was on a little jar that Mr. Bulger had made first of red clay, and then had put a coat of the buff color over it. In designing this Mr. Hazenplug scraped off all but what he wished to use for the design of the light clay, so that the completed work shows the buff color in slight relief and simply massed in the form of a flower used as a decoration, the red clay making a rich background.

Mr. Bulger has used a deep yellow and green glaze on some of the pottery most effectively, and we hope soon to see other results in color which his experiments have proved successful.

The group of objects reproduced here, of which the dish makes the center, have not yet been in the kiln, and the final color is still a pleasant uncertainty.

Mr. Bulger feels his work to be quite undeveloped, and of course the successful results of his experiments have been interspersed with many a failure, but even though he may still have much to do, his beginnings have been found so interesting that those who know them look forward to seeing the work that he and Mr. Hazenplug will do in the years to come.

MABEL KEY.



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